



VOLUNTEER OUTDOORS AND INSPIRE NATURE EXPLORATION

Educate the community about beach animals or become a birder and monitor purple martins

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 4, 2022

TACOMA, Wash.— If you like exploring the natural world and want to contribute to real science research while having fun connecting to the outdoors, then you're invited to volunteer with a community science program through Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium and Tacoma Nature Center. Explore the Shore along Owen Beach, Tiptoe through the Tidepools at Titlow Beach or Spot the Swallows at Dickman Mill Park and Titlow park. It's all about protecting wildlife, helping others connect with nature, and contributing to research.

"These programs get people outside and connect them to wild places and wild animals," said Wendy Spaulding, conservation engagement curator at Point Defiance Zoo. "The volunteers will inspire conservation, appreciation and action on behalf of our local wildlife."

Become a Beach Walk Naturalist

Become a beach naturalist and educate the public about marine animals and how to care for their home at Owen Beach in Point Defiance Park and Titlow Beach at Titlow Park. During scheduled public beach walks, naturalists will help participants connect to the awe-inspiring life in the intertidal zone. They will aid participants in beach stewardship actions, animal identification, and community science actions using the iNaturalist mobile app to record the presence of marine animals.

Volunteers must be 16 years of age or an active participant in the Zoo Guide youth volunteer program. Volunteers are required to attend one classroom training in May and at least one beach training in May or June.

Classroom training:

- May 19, 11:30am-12:45pm
- May 21, 1:15pm-2:30pm

Beach training:

- Owen Beach, May 19, 1:15pm-2:30pm
- Titlow Beach, May 21, 3:15pm-4:15pm
- Owen Beach, June 12, 8:15am-9:15am
- Titlow Beach, June 12, 8:15am-9:15am

Become a Birder: Spot the Swallows

Help monitor local nest box sites at Dickman Mill Park on Ruston Way or at Titlow Park for purple martins and observe their presence, breeding behaviors and chick sightings.

Volunteers must be 18 years of age or older or an active participant in the Zoo Guide youth volunteer program. Volunteers are required to attend a training on April 2 from 2pm-4pm to learn how important these beautiful birds are to our ecosystem and how to monitor their populations. Volunteers are asked to attend a minimum of two observations per month. Each field session takes 2 hours (occurring 2 hours after sunrise or the 2 hours before sunset) from mid-April to September.

If you're interested in becoming a volunteer for any of these programs and learning more about the world around you, while also making a crucial contribution to the living body of scientific data, visit the [adult volunteer page](#) on Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium's website.

###

Contacts:

Whitney DalBalcon, 253-278-6343 or whitney.dalbalcon@pdza.org

Tessa Miller, 253-686-6927 or tessa.miller@pdza.org